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Memories of cell No. 15 still fresh for Suarez

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MIAMI - Barely 16 hours after Miguel M. Suarez arrived here from nearly four months' imprisonment in Cuba on espionage charges, he was on the telephone yesterday, working.

The 42-year-old Arlington, Mass., resident was briefed on business matters by officials of Matra Datavision, the Burlington computer-aided design software firm that he helped found last year. Then there was breakfast with Robert Krevy, a vice president and close friend who came to Miami Tuesday to greet him. They talked about a video display terminal that Suarez says he thought a lot about during his captivity.

Suarez, his wife Celia, and Isabelle Maria, their daughter, who was born while he was imprisoned, were staying in a Miami Beach hotel under an assumed name to avoid reporters. They planned to spend the rest of the week there sunbathing and getting to know each other again.

But the memories are still fresh for prisoner No. 217118, especially of the psychological torture, the videotaped "confession" that he was a CIA agent, the screams of other prisoners and the four weeks of solitary confinement.

"It was all psychological," he said. "They want to destroy your faith, make you forget your wife and family. They tell you that your children will grow up and never know you and that my father, who is 76, will die in a year. Sometimes it is revolutionary harangue - 'Look at what your American imperialists have done to Cuba, your homeland.'"

Suarez' darkest moment, he said, came at the end of his captivity while his wife, relatives and the media waited at Miami International Airport. Taken

Tuesday afternoon to the airport in Havana, he was released by guards and a member of the Cuban Foreign Ministry to board an Aero Sun jet. But all 44 seats on the plane were filled.

"I thought I'd be stranded alone. It was one of the worst experiences," he said. "Luckily, an old man agreed to stay on for another day and I got his seat. When the plane began to move and it was collecting speed, I began to calculate it all. I said to myself, 'My God, this could be it. I'm really going home.'"

Nearly 16 weeks earlier, the Cuban-born Suarez, who left the island in 1961, had returned to visit his sick mother. Upon his arrival in Havana on April 23, Cuban immigration officials noticed his passport had stamps from around the world. As an engineer and computer graphics consultant who worked for Computervision Inc. and Arthur D. Little Inc. as well as his own firm, he had visited Europe and South America. He had also made three previous trips to Cuba to visit his divorced parents.

Soon after his arrival, he visited his mother, and after several attempts to catch a flight out of Havana, he was told he could not get onto a plane until May 7. But the night before his scheduled departure, he said, his mother became ill and he stayed all night with her. When he returned to his hotel, police were waiting.

Suarez discussed the days of his captivity during a two-hour interview in his hotel room yesterday. While he was specific in many ways, he said he was reticent about disclosing all the details of his imprisonment for fear of retribution against relatives still in Cuba.

After being arrested, he said, he was taken to the Villa Marista detention center, a former convent near Havana. He

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